

[P. 463 - B]

Teklum

682 these suspicions and kill the witch. If he should
674 kill the witch while the patient is still alive, it
75 is believed that the patient will die.

682 Killing men for cattle theft (six cases) is a
685 relatively recent occurrence. It has put homi-
674 cide on the market: the associations of
[463] cattle-owners have hired killers in three of the
[697] six cases. In addition to the killer's fee, they
pay the fine to release him from prison. Fines
for homicide have increased in the past five
years—from 1,000 to 3,000 pesos—but not
sufficiently to price the murder of cattle

• [435] thieves out of the market. A good bull is worth
1,500 pesos, and the threat of further loss by
theft seems to justify the expenditure of fees
and fines. When the cattle-owners lose some
685 of their herd, they go to spiritualists or to San
787 Miguel, the talking saint of Ixtapa, to find out
776 who did the stealing. Since such evidence does
not hold up in court, legal settlement is not
685 attempted. Legal action, moreover, would
694 create an enemy who might seek revenge. A
Ladino secretary of the town center who had
lost a bull accused a man of stealing his cattle
and demanded 500 pesos in compensation. By
receiving the money he jeopardized his safety,
and eventually he had to leave town.

The Resolution of the Case

682 It is nearly impossible to find witnesses to
69 homicide. Of these 37 cases, 28 resulted in no
action being taken by the authorities, and in
five cases where the killers went to jail, they
were released with the payment of minimal
fines. In the calculations of the townspeople, it
is hardly worth risking one's neck to get such a
minimal revenge.

682 However, this does not mean that homicide
593 goes unnoticed in the community. After a
626 killing the widow sings of the life of the dead
[683] man. If she is in agreement with the verdict
arrived at by the killer and others, she will
deny knowledge of what he has done, or even
suggest that she too was aware of what harm
he has caused (one widow implied that her
husband, killed as a witch, was responsible for
the death of four of her six children). If she
objects to the verdict, she sings of what a good
man he was and how blameless. She will then
air her own suspicions in the following weeks as
to who killed her husband.

682 Following the funeral, when the women
683 have left the cemetery, the men sit at the
627 grave. As they measure out a liter of liquor and
pass it around, they advance hypotheses as

795 In most of the prayers, Dios Tatik Jesu-
 782 cristo and the 13 *fiadores* who are in heaven
 are mentioned. These 13 *fiadores* are God's
 immediate helpers and correspond to the
 [778] Christian saints. The cross is venerated as a
 representation of God wherever a prayer is
 said and so appears on the family altar, on
 mountaintops, in caves, at fountains, at en-
 trances to the town, at the four corners of
 the plaza, and in front of the church.

795 The local character of Catholicism is seen
 778 in the Masses offered to the mountain called
 776 Ikal Ajau, near the ceremonial center of
 177 Oxchuc. The Indians say that it is a "living
 mountain" and give it great reverence, for
 Ikal Ajau was the name of the idol venerated
 by Oxchuc people in pre-Hispanic
 795 times. In almost all the municipios the
 184 saints are dressed as Indians. Towns with a
 776 large Ladino population have different
 saints for the Ladinos, who are dressed as
 Ladinos and to whom the Indians are com-
 pletely indifferent, even to forgetting the
 names of them.

Fiesta for the Patron Saint

796 One of the major events in the religious
 794 life of the Indians is the annual fiesta in
 honor of the patron saint and the other
 saints kept in the church. The capitán prin-
 cipal and some of his immediate assistants
 are in charge of the organization and ex-
 penses of these fiestas. The length and cost
 of the fiesta correspond to the importance
 • [435] of the saint and range from one day and
 100 pesos to four days and several thou-
 sand pesos, like the one for the patron saint.
 To become a capitán principal a man must
 go through all the ranks and be able to af-
 ford the expenses of any fiesta, from a small
 one to the very large ones of the patrons.

796 The fiesta of the patron of each village is
 similar to that for any other saint but larger.
 There are Masses and other religious ob-
 servances in the church, processions with
 the image of the saint along the main
 streets, large meals at the house of the
 cargoholders, and, above all, constant drink-

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[Text continues on p. 222-B]

571 tions of community members. We now propose to display some of
the ways in which further sets of performances, among them
drinking, are associated with those already described.

Roles and the procurement of alcohol

273* The procurement of alcohol for drinking involves social
571 relationships which have undergone a change within the period
178 of study. Traditionally, Aguacatenangueros have obtained
273* aguardiente--a distilled sugar cane alcohol--by purchase. For
439 many years aguardiente was manufactured by ladinos in San
Cristobal and in Comitan principally for sale to the Indians.
Before 1940, one ladino family established a liquor monopoly
throughout the highlands and with the aid of government liquor
inspectors was able to close down all competitors, which meant
that production in Comitan and San Cristobal was completely
stopped save for the factories of this family. In the first
part of this period, then, Aguacatenangueros bought all their
aguardiente from Comitan, and it was and still is known as
273* comiteco by Indians and ladinos throughout the area. With the
548 closing down of the several factories that produced aguardiente,
Indians--principally Chamulas--began to manufacture the aguardiente
in clandestine stills in mountain areas that were apparently dif-
ficult to patrol. The monopoly determined price of about 90
pesos a garafón (18 liters) was cut nearly in half by these
clandestine operators.

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creased the economic independence of the Indians. The present total of 613 ejidatarios in 1965 has increased 59 percent since the original grant. The dependence of the town's economy on the ejido land can be assessed in the fact that 63 percent of the pasture land is held in ejido grants. The use of land resources in the township is summarized in Table 4.

TABLE 4. Agricultural Productivity by Size of Landholding

Size of landholding (hectares)	Weight of produce (kilograms)	Value of produce (pesos)	Land used (percentage)
Less than 5 hectares			
Corn	200,000	120,000	83.
Wheat	29,000	27,550	16.8
Fruit	3,000	9,000	.2
1 hectare of ejido land			
Corn	319,688	223,781	49.
Corn (with beans)	30,320	21,224	6.
Beans (with corn)	14,000	17,360	
Wheat	185,580	181,580	28.
Beans	84,322	104,322	17.
More than 5 hectares			
Corn	67,388	45,117	34.
Corn (with beans)	96,550	68,108	51.
Beans (with corn)	42,985	56,740	
Alfalfa	350,000	42,000	4.6
Fruit	14,508	9,720	4.4
Other			6.

SOURCE: 1960 census, Mexico.

According to the 1960 census figures on productivity per hectare, privately owned plots under five hectares yield the highest return in corn (1,097 kgs. per hectare), privately owned plots over five hectares the next highest return (925 kgs. per hectare), and ejido plots of one hectare the least (810 kgs. per hectare). In the census evaluation of wheat and corn production on privately owned plots of less than five hectares, wheat apparently yields a higher return (807 pesos per hectare of wheat compared with 658 pesos per hectare of corn). This relative return is nearly the same for the corn produced on ejido lands (820 pesos per hectare return on wheat compared with 603 pesos for corn). However, this is figured at the maximum market price for wheat of 124 pesos per 100 kgs.

000 maximum market price for wheat of 124 pesos per 100 kgs. The Indians
 435 usually sell their wheat at 90 pesos per 100 kgs. to Teopisca truckers, or at
 442 best gain 110 pesos per 100 kgs. by bringing it to the mills themselves.
 241 From their perspective corn is the more valuable crop, not only from the
 point of view of subsistence, but also for sale since if they hold it in stor-
 age they can sell it at double the price at which the values are calculated in
 the census (.60 peso per kg.). They do not have facilities to store wheat in
 order to take maximum advantage of price changes.

125 The census I made in 1964 of land ownership and use by the 304 fami-
 423 lies living in the center of the township (Table 5) shows that 47 percent
 161 of the households have no land other than the ejido grant of one hectare.
 Because of the growing population, the land per household has decreased.
 A comparison with the 1958 census of land ownership of 280 households
 in the center indicates that 89 families now have less land than they had at
 that date, 72 have the same amount, and 44 have more land; 99 unknown
 cases include new families which have been created since the earlier date,
 families which were no longer in existence in 1964, and households in
 which there is a lack of data on the question of landholding.

423 The strong sentiment against the sale of one's own land, well docu-
 432 mented in the monographic literature,² is expressed here:

*If a man sells his land without sickness, people say he is lazy. The best
 thing to buy if you have money is land. Unlike cattle, it does not die, it
 does not get lost, and it does not need watching. It is not the same with a
 horse. When you buy one, you have to watch it and care for it and when
 it dies, all is over. You lose all your money. But with land, in two years
 you have the land paid for and it remains as a gift. It gives us what we
 eat.*

423 Land is rarely sold to outsiders. If a man needs money and has a buyer
 432 from out of town, the civil authorities raise the money and buy the plot,
 609 selling it in pieces as they find buyers. Only one small plot of land has
 621 been sold to an outsider in my knowledge of the community. This plot

2. See Tax (1957), Wagley (1941). Oscar Lewis (1963:125) indicates that in Tepotzlan the breakdown of the resistance to selling land was associated with a growing awareness of profits to be made in the regional and national economy.

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base, so the farmers prefer to plant the better, quicker-growing corn seed 242
in a mixed sand and loam soil.

The final evaluation of land is based on results at harvest. The range of 242
variation is large: from 48 liters of yield per liter of seed to 80 liters of 433
yield per liter of seed. Township officials say that the average harvest is
five *fanegas* (1 fanega equals 12 liters) or 60 liters per liter of seed. Market [435]
prices are of less importance in deciding what crops will be planted than
are considerations of what the soil "wants" and what labor is involved.
Corn is grown on all kinds of land, whereas beans and special crops such
as cabbages can be grown only on the more fertile soil. Wheat can be
grown only where there is irrigation. One farmer raised cabbage in coop- [434]
eration with a Ladino and earned 1,000 pesos, four times the amount he
earned with his wheat crop the previous year. Despite the greater return
for cabbage, the farmer did not plant it the next year when the Ladino,
who had supported the first venture, withdrew his support. The reason he
gave for this was the fact that there was more work involved and he could
not accomplish it alone: first the crop had to be planted, then transplanted,
then irrigated every three days in the early growing period, and cultivated
two or three times; every eight days he had to get rid of worms. He esti- [461]
mated that growing cabbage involved well over four times the amount of
work necessary for growing corn.

Labor. Most agricultural work is performed by members of 592
households with exchange or hired labor. There is no specialization of 241
labor when the work force includes two or more men since the men 476
cooperate in doing each task. Communal labor is restricted to the mainte- 464
nance of the main irrigation ditches. Each year the ditches are dug out 241
where the sides have eroded and cleaned of brush and leaves. The presi- 621
dent and judges unite to decide on a time for this work and announce it 476
on a loudspeaker of one of the cantinas. This usually occurs around the
twenty-fifth of December. Formerly, all the men of the community helped
in this work whether or not they owned irrigated fields. In 1958 those who
did not own such land "got smart" and refused to work. [578]
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In 1962 the civil officials decided that a cement canal should be installed 653
near the source of the spring. They tried to finance it with contributions 621
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434 of the farm by renting additional land, as European peasants typically
 464 did,⁵ since there is very little land available for rent and the returns are
 427 not immediate. Farmers will try to avoid this by acquiring land grants to
 241 increase subsistence agriculture.

125 Expenditures and earnings were studied in six families over varying pe-
 434 riods of time from ten days to one year. The data are summarized below.

434 Family No. 1, consisting of a husband, his wife, and their married
 592 daughter separated from her husband and child, is able to meet all of their
 (241) need for corn and brown sugar and most of their need for beans by the
 crops they raise on one-half hectare of ejido land in hot country, one-half
 hectare of ejido land in the township, and three-quarters hectare of pri-
 vately owned, irrigated land in the township. On their irrigated land, they
 grow one-half hectare of wheat and one-quarter hectare of corn. In hot
 country they grow corn, beans, and sugar cane on the margins of the field.
 The cane is ground in a cooperatively owned mill, and their crop in 1965
 produced 144 *tapas*, or measures of one kilogram worth 5 pesos. In addi-
 tion to 200 pesos earned for the wheat crop, 100 pesos for the bean crop,
 298 pesos for corn, this farmer earned 808 pesos for outside work. His high
 wage income is due to his working for an American at twice the usual
 daily pay. The farmer buys coffee by the twenty-five-pound bag costing 62
 (464) pesos in hot country, a saving of about one-half the retail price of coffee in
 (465) the town, where it is sold at 5 or 7 pesos at pound. In twelve months of re-
 corded expenditures, the family spent 609.50 pesos or 83 percent of their
 budget on food, 40 pesos or 5 percent of their budget on clothing and 82
 pesos or 11 percent of their budget on medicine.

(583) The high expenditures in the case of family No. 2, consisting of a man,
 his wife, and two mature sons, was due to the fact that one of the boys was
 carrying on a betrothal suit. The bride-price had been fixed at 500 pesos,
 toward which the family was contributing whatever excess of income over
 expenditures it had. The son who was seeking a wife worked fifty-six days
 (464) in the sawmill at a wage of 15 pesos per day during the six-month period
 (465) recorded, earning 255 pesos. In addition, he and his brother earned 160
 pesos for agricultural work for other families.

5. Chayanov (1966:7) demonstrated that Russian peasant families expanded the size
 of their farms when the subjective needs of the family increased, not as a response to
 market prices for crops or rents.
 in the village.

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pesos for agricultural work for other families in the village. The expenditures of this family on meat, brown sugar, and liquor were required for the house celebrations carried out almost every Sunday. Like family No. 1 they spent 83 percent of their budget on food, a total of 714.80 pesos, and a larger percentage on clothing, 138 pesos. They sold their surplus corn for 292 pesos and their beans for 247 pesos. These crops were produced on one hectare of privately owned, irrigated land, one hectare of privately owned, non-irrigated land and one hectare of ejido land.

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Family No. 3 consists of a widow and her widowed daughter-in-law who had five children. The oldest son, aged sixteen, worked their one-half hectare of ejido land and one-half hectare of irrigated land with some hired help during harvest. During the three weeks recorded, there were no returns from their crops, which include wheat and corn, and the family relied entirely on returns from pottery. This household produces more pottery than any of the others recorded, earning 61 pesos in the three weeks, because there are no adult male producers. They spent 63 percent of their budget on food, a total of 42 pesos, and 34 percent or 23 pesos on clothing.

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Family No. 4 consists of a married couple with three children seven years of age and under. The husband works occasionally in the sawmill, but since he drinks a great deal, he does not contribute much of his 70-peso weekly wage to the family. He grows wheat on one-half hectare of irrigated land and corn on one-half hectare of ejido land. In the ten days recorded, no money was gained on harvest, but the woman earned 19 pesos from pottery. The family spent 77 percent, or 17.20 pesos of their budget on food and another 22 percent, or 5 pesos such as soap, kerosene, etc.

Family No. 5 consists of a married couple, their married son and daughter-in-law, and three grandchildren. They own one and one-half hectare of irrigated land, on which they grow wheat and corn, and one-half hectare of ejido land. The husband and his son supplement their earning from farming by distilling liquor, earning 108 pesos in the ten days recorded. In addition, the women of the household earned 54 pesos from pottery they made. They spent 143 pesos, or 97 percent of their budget on food and 3 pesos, or 2 percent of their budget, on clothing.

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Family No. 6 consists of a young couple with two children. The husband owns one-half hectare of irrigated land, and one-half hectare of non-

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have recently sought additional lands in the ejido of Brindis to meet these minimal requirements. This preference for expanding subsistence agriculture to hiring out as laborers is the best index to the persistence of traditional economic pursuits.

Farmers who do not have a cash crop in wheat may be forced to sell corn even when there is no surplus. Because they usually need the cash as soon as they harvest their crop, they must sell when the prices are low. Thus their consumption needs exacerbate the disadvantage they face in the market.

Clothing, whether traditional or modern in style, requires cash outlays. Women have kept the traditional costume while men are modifying their clothing. Even when they go to hot country, older women wear the heavy cotton skirt bound with a thick sash and topped by an embroidered blouse; some younger women have adopted the long cotton dirndl skirt and peasant blouse. A white cotton shawl is added for ceremonial events or for warmth in the evening. All of their clothing is either bought or made of materials woven on looms in Comitán or San Bartolomé. The navy blue skirt, which they say is black, and the red and yellow sash are sold for 40 to 50 pesos by Ladina vendors who come to town. The blouse is made from two meters of heavy white cotton sold in the local stores or in Teopisca and San Cristóbal. Most prefer the more expensive cotton woven on bed looms in San Bartolomé, but it is not always available. They embroider the wide bands of yellow and red around the neckline with embroidery floss sold in the local store. The fringed shawl from Comitán is also sold locally, but is often purchased during the annual fiestas in the town. These items are replaced every two or three years, depending on the wealth of the family. The newer clothing is worn on ceremonial occasions, and the older clothing is worn every day. Women wear sandals and hats for protection only when they are firing pottery. For jewelry they wear bead necklaces, sometimes with crosses attached. Their hair is braided with ribbons for fiestas, or simply left hanging when they work.

Men buy a woolen jacket called *ko-ton-tu*, which is brought illegally from the Department of Huehuetenango, Guatemala, where it is made,

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Houses are built of materials locally produced or gathered from communal resources, but new construction materials, such as tiles, require cash outlay. The average house area is thirty-six square meters divided into two main rooms. Building is usually done in February or March. After the

TABLE 12. Clothing Expenditure and Origin

	Price (pesos)	Place of origin
Men's clothing		
Kotonču from Guatemala	60	Huehuetenango
Kotonču from Mexico	40	Comitán
Shirt worn by elders	60	San Bartolomé
Underpants	15	San Bartolomé
High-backed sandals	25	San Cristóbal
Wrapped pants	25	Teopisca
Tailored shirt	30	Teopisca
Factory-made shirt	7	San Cristóbal and Comitán
Straw hats	10	Teopisca and San Cristóbal
Factory-made pants	15	Teopisca and San Cristóbal
Belt	5	Teopisca, San Cristóbal, and Comitán
Sash	7	Comitán
Huaraches	20	San Cristóbal
Women's clothing		
Wrapped skirt	40-60	Comitán
Huipile, factory-made cloth	50	San Cristóbal
Huipile, hand-loomed cloth	60	San Bartolomé
Reboza	12-16	Comitán
Apron	5	San Cristóbal
Children's clothing		
Girl's skirt	7	Teopisca
Girl's blouse	5	Teopisca
Boy's shirt	3-5	Teopisca
Boy's hat	3-4	Teopisca, San Cristóbal
Boy's pants	5	Teopisca

materials have been collected, the construction of the house frame takes about eight days' work with the cooperation of five or six men. Filling in the walls with mud takes another three days. Table 13 gives the cost of materials and transportation for one house built during my stay.

The biggest change in housing has been in the roofs. The old type of

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342 construction used thatch or palm leaves carried from hot country. These
 177 cost only the price of renting a horse, if it was necessary, for transporta-
 • 435 tion. Roofs made of these materials have to be replaced every seven or
 [492] eight years. Each rethatching requires three days' work with four or five
 helpers, and the houseowner must provide a meal for them and their fami-
 lies. He spends about 25 pesos for meat and uses two or three liters of
 corn; the total cost is about 75 pesos. Another kind of roof is made of
 wooden shingles bought in the neighboring town. These are fixed to the
 housetops with wooden pegs, and the total cost is about 200 pesos. This
 lasts ten or twelve years with replacement of individual shingles. Tile
 roofs have the highest initial cost, 800 pesos, but the lowest maintenance in
 labor.

TABLE 13. Construction Costs for House, 1965

	Cost (pesos)
Supplies	
Roof tiles (1,000)	800
Posts and poles	•
Planks	40
Door	100
Window frame	30
Services	
Transportation of tiles	30
Transportation of posts and poles	206
Carpenter	50
Food for helpers	75
TOTAL	1,331

* Obtained free from communal woods.

342 House walls are preferably made of mud mixed with lime poured into
 an interlacing of cane poles set between the house posts and tied with a
 handmade fiber rope. Another temporary type of construction, which does
 not offer as good insulation, is made of board planks. Sweatbaths are
 343 made by digging out a floor about 2.5 meters square, raising stones in an
 oval shape over this, and plastering them with mud. The I.N.I. tried to in-
 [514] troduce latrines, but no more than a half dozen of the cement toilet seats
 [647] they gave away as demonstrators were put into use. Latrines are consid-
 [177] ered to be dirty since the pigs and dogs
 [231] cannot scavenge the feces.

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of witchcraft. Today probably 95 percent of the new roofs are made of tile. Often the old roofs cannot be replaced with tile because the rafters were not built to support them. One result of the change has been the dependence on a carpenter to construct the gables, since they have to be lined up more accurately than they do with thatch or palm roofs.

House lots in the town center are preferred to those on the margins. As residents of house sites on the ejido lands at the margins of the town acquire wealth, one of the first things they try to do is acquire a house closer to the plaza. These lots are smaller, averaging about 500 square meters, while those farther out average 900 square meters. In a sample measurement of 100 house lots, the size ranged from 180 to 1,440 square meters, and the average size was 77 square meters. Considering the advantages of a large lot in growing chile fruits and corn, the preference for smaller central lots reveals the strong prestige factor influencing choice.

House furnishings include both purchased and homemade items. Sleeping accommodations consist of wooden bedboards, either nailed on a frame or simply laid on blocks and covered with a straw mat. Woolen blankets from Comitán are sold locally at a price of 24 pesos or for 20 pesos in San Cristóbal and 18 pesos in Comitán. Most households own two or three wooden benches which line the walls of the porch and are made locally. Small chairs are purchased from Chamula carpenters at a cost of 2 to 4 pesos, as well as a small table costing about 4. A higher table is provided for the saints' pictures and candle holders, incense burner, and flower vases or tin cans. Hooks are fashioned from the crotch of trees and suspended on the house posts. Wooden boxes are bought from Ladino carpenters in San Cristóbal at a cost of 10 to 20 pesos depending on size and workmanship and are used to store clothing. In addition to the homemade water holders, water carriers, comales, strainers, and bowls, handmade glazed ware from San Cristóbal, factory-made porcelain dishes, metal cooking pots, knives, and spoons are purchased. Gourds provide serving ware for ceremonial occasions. Stone grinding platforms and rollers are purchased in San Cristóbal for about 10 pesos. Two new items have become increasingly popular in the past five years: a metal grinding machine for corn, hand operated and costing from 40 to 60 pesos depending on the size and quality, and a hinged press for tortillas, costing 15 pesos if made

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of metal and 10 pesos if made of wood. These are lined with waxed paper which the local storekeeper cuts from cracker-box wrappers and sells for 5 cents each. 435
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Electricity, first used in the cooperative store and later in the liquor shops, is now being installed in houses. 83 families had electricity installed in their homes by 1967. Street lights have been in operation since 1966, although the first attempt to install them was blocked by residents on the streets to be lighted who did not want to pay the tax of 1 peso per month per household to meet the cost to the community of 75 pesos a month. Most people have a flashlight, and lighting in the house is provided by pitch pine or by small kerosene lamps. Candles are used only in ceremonies. 365
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The inventory of items sold in the cooperative store in town includes the most frequently purchased items of consumption. Hardware includes buckets, hoes, kerosene lamps, batteries, Gillette blades, shotgun bullets, canned goods such as sardines, chiles, and powdered milk. Packaged foods include rice, sugar, salt, oatmeal, cornstarch, flour, coffee, biscuits, cookies, gum, and candy. Beer is sold along with soft drinks and cigarettes. Household supplies include candles, soap, D.D.T. powder, thread, matches, and kerosene. Medicines dispensed most frequently include sulphur pills, aralin, Desenfriol, Alka-Seltzer, and Sonrisal. Yard goods for shawls, children's wraps, and men's clothing are sold along with manufactured shirts, blouses for girls, and rubber capes. Eggs as well as money are taken in payment and then sold. Except for one can of Chocomilk, which sat on the shelves for a year, all of the items are in constant demand, and provide an index to the level of living and dependency on external markets. 444
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The preferences in changing consumption are limited by communal standards of what is appropriate. I once asked a man who was acquiring more than the usual income by brokerage activities what he would buy with more money. He replied, "I would get more land and cattle." I interrupted to ask what he would do to improve his standard of living. "I wouldn't get better clothing—what would I need that for? I would get a house built with good materials like this [the government-built clinic] with a cement floor. But I couldn't get it now because of envy. When my children grow up, they [the neighbors] will see them working and maybe 434
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New Economic Activities

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highly stratified primitive society, which remains static: it lacks the flexibility and mobility that exists in modern societies. 423

The history of the ejido program in Tzo'ontahal in the first few years after it was organized in 1937 seemed to confirm this conclusion. Its immediate effect was to block the flow of labor and goods in the regional and national markets. The ejidatarios were no longer forced to sell their labor at the prevailing rate of 25 cents a day, a wage which was not enough to supply the needs of even one man much less those of a household. Children and women formerly had to work with their husbands in the coffee fincas in order to meet their most immediate consumption needs. The independence that the ejido tract gave meant that men could withhold their own labor and that of the subordinate members of the family from such exploitation. The second harvests coming from the ejido plots in low country freed the Indians from having to buy corn in July, August, and September at the inflated market prices which took advantage of the scarcity of this basic necessity. 175 423 182 464 465 [241] [435]

The political effect of the ejido in the early days was to fortify the corporate community against the shocks of the outside world. The first lands acquired were primarily allotments of corporate lands alienated by the laws of 1856 and 1876. Populations remained in situ, whether they were foreign Indians working on the expropriated estates, or residential communities created in the sixteenth century as crown towns. 175 423 621

The township of Amatenango acquired its first ejido land grant in 1937. One of the early promoters of the ejido, a *revestido* Indian (one who has adopted western clothing) from Huistán who had been a laborer on one of the fincas within the township limits, threatened to become a rural *ca-cique*, or local boss, comparable to those who emerged from the agrarian revolt in the central plateau (Friedrich 1962). This leader was elected president, but during his term of office he was expelled because of his attempt to secure house plots in the center for himself and other Huistecan Indians residing in the barrio of Yetawitz (Chapter 9). [177]

The stabilizing effects of the ejido in its earlier phase have been upset in recent years. As the population of the center expanded, new families migrated to the nearby barrios contiguous to the town center. These new set- 423 621 166

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178 coming from the smaller towns to buy. The Indians still bring pottery to
 442 sell retail in towns that they visit during a fiesta. One of these is the barrio
 443 of Lok'ibal in the municipio of Villa Carranza, where people go on the
 third Friday of Lent to get holy water from the spring.

The Indians have not taken advantage of the truck to buy pottery
 wholesale and market it directly in the smaller towns, selling from the
 truck in the plaza as some of the wholesale fruit truckers do. Another op-
 eration which they have failed to profit from is buying the wheat harvest
 and selling to government warehouses, as some of the Ladino truckers do.

44 Lack of capital is the major reason for failure to exploit these opportuni-
 471 ties. In marketing the contraband liquor, which is the most flourishing of
 273 the new enterprises, the Indians have not yet entered into the external
 443 markets except in the case of one young unmarried mother. Wholesale
 434 purchases are made by Ladinos, primarily women, from other towns who
 resell the liquor in Comitán and on the coast. There is however, a well-de-
 675 veloped home market since all contracts are sealed with the offering of liq-
 681 uor, the "gift of the gods," all court fines are paid in liquor, and the main
 583 gift in betrothal is liquor. The cantinas with phonograph players opened
 275 by the cooperatives operate very successfully on Saturday night and during
 216 fiestas. The internal market for liquor is controlled by a syndicate of the
 548 forty-two independent liquor distillers. The price is set at 4 pesos per liter
 435 for all buyers, with the buyer providing the bottle.

241 Agricultural production is not geared to a market, and Indians do not
 442 take advantage of fluctuations in price. Wheat yields a lower return per
 443 unit of land than corn, but it is grown for two reasons: the Indians believe
 that crop rotation of corn and wheat prevents depletion of the soil, and
 wheat requires less work since no cultivation is needed. Wheat is a cash
 crop and none of it is milled or consumed directly in town. Poor families
 sell their wheat "standing" to Teopisca truckers. The price given the
 435 grower is usually about 90 pesos per hundred kilograms, and it is resold at
 110 or 120 pesos in Tuxtla or to the government storehouses. Wheat is
 sometimes brought directly to San Cristóbal millers who give 120 per hun-
 dred kilograms. Corn is primarily a subsistence crop when grown in the
 center. Corn grown in hot country ejido land is now sold in Teopisca and
 489 San Cristóbal. The local truck cooperative has a special permit which gives

Rituals of Life Crisis

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dies are expected to give a funeral appropriate to his station in life and his wealth, as is expressed in the following account:

When my father got sick, he told his wife not to put him in a black box. He had heard a story that when the dead man is in a black box, his spirit cannot see. He wanted to be in a white box. He told this to his brother. But his brother wanted to get a black box. He bought one black box for three hundred pesos when my father died, because it is the custom of the pueblo to bury adults in a black box. The people would talk if we did not buy a good box because they knew he had animals. We spent six hundred pesos for the funeral. We presented the body in church for a mass. We had a singing mass for thirty pesos, and the box cost three hundred pesos. We had a common meal of beef in the house, and we spent two hundred and sixteen pesos for three garrafones of liquor. Each of his sons contributed sixty pesos for that. If we hadn't given him a good funeral, people would have said, "His children are very lax not to buy a good box to bury their father."

The padre says that all bodies should be presented in the church. He says if you don't have money, you don't have to pay for the mass. But we are ashamed if we don't pay because he does work for us. He charged only twenty-five pesos because he said my father worked hard for the town. We took a collection from all the people who were there, and it amounted to one hundred and thirty pesos. We paid the padre for the mass and gave a contribution. All the people in whose houses he had passed when he was alive came to see him. They said, "Ah, his children gave a very nice box for their father."

If all of the family is poor, no one talks if the funeral is not a good one. But if there is anything that can be sold, it will have to be to make a good funeral. When my father died, he had eighteen horses. We had to sell one, and each of the children gave one hundred pesos.

Some say the souls play the harp and drink liquor when they arrive in heaven. On All Soul's Day they visit the village where they had lived and where they are known. For each member of the household who had died, a specific portion of food is laid out. Special likes are catered to: a bottle of liquor will be set on the table for a deceased father, soda pop for children

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177 and adaptive responses. With the expansion of cattle raising, Indians have
178 organized associations adjusted to the traditional dual division. The asso-
621 ciation for each side of the dual division mobilizes labor for maintaining
476 the watering holes. The failure to organize communal corrals means that
312 inefficient herding techniques, damage to the milpa, and frequent loss or
(685) theft of cattle persist. The association reacts to the last problem by hiring
killers to get rid of those suspected of theft, but this adaptive response is
limited to dealing with particular incidents and has not solved the prob-
lem.

548 The manufacturers of contraband liquor have succeeded in organizing a
273 syndicate strong enough to maintain a monopoly price for both the inter-
177 nal and external markets and to provide security for themselves against
178 federal agents. The syndicate mobilizes for specific actions, such as raising
• 435 the bail bond for imprisoned members or punishing informers. As a com-
694 munity-wide organization ignoring the dual division and age-ranked sen-
681 iority, it represents an adaptation in response to extra-community pres-
621 sures.
(561)

474 The cooperatives that have been organized to manage the local store
177 and the trucks provide permanent managerial operations that are an adap-
178 tation to growing interaction in extra-community economic activities.
Cooperative owners are able to raise the capital to maintain and expand
these operations. It is within these structures that entrepreneurial skills are
being developed. The organizers gain the advantage not only of socializ-
ing the risk of loss but also of making a profit in a community where be-
lief in witchcraft, fostered by envy, is rampant.

474 Activities in the new economic enterprises are not supported by any su-
472 pernatural belief. In order to gain acceptance for the new enterprises, the
177 entrepreneur Santos, who had organized the trucking cooperative, recog-
178 nized the need for an ideology. His rhetoric drew upon the sense of depri-
vation Indians feel in their relations with Ladinos. He justified his own
ends as an attempt to gain for all the community the profits that only La-
dinos had been able to gain through trucking and crops resales in the re-
gional markets. The ideology he had begun to formulate stressed eco-
nomic and political independence from both the Ladino entrepreneurs of
neighboring towns and government agents who tried to promote welfare